



The Minstrel

REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
CREATIVE AND LITERARY ARTS
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Slow

Thank you for picking up this edition of The Minstrel. The theme for this edition is "Slow". Our community has gathered works that come from times of letting life slow down. May these pieces help you catch your breath, slow down your pace and reflect on the simplest pleasures that come from being aware in the moment.

Jennifer Hoogsteen
Kayla Nielsen




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Affliction | Magdalena Brzoska

Sighing deeply now
Relishing quiet moments
God has answered me

Untranslated
Kattie Witten

Hymn | Amy Wiseman

i remember how good the ocean felt
the salty air filled my lungs
my body tingled with this new intake of oxygen
the sand was speckled with shells and
broken glass
i only took notice of the softness between
my toes
the land surrounding me was welcoming
and strange
the mountains were like words of a foreign
language
that i was determined to understand
never had i seen a world like it
photographs can't do it justice
but they do help me to remember
the days spent in awe of creation
when my spirit was so full
that i sang constantly
my wanderlust was God-breathed
my Guide has a firm grip
i've tried to loosen my hand from His
only to be lost in a desert without
water or shade

i don't know how to read a compass
we traverse the hills together
i see the grass filled with flowers
the endless vineyards in the distance
i am outside of myself here
every step feels heavy
as if i would eventually sink into the scenery
from these hills and mountains i smell the
salt of the ocean
i see the clouds fill with colours i didn't
know existed
i couldn't speak
all that left my lips were songs that
wove into the wind
my eyes produced a rain storm
the water fed my feet as the deep roots they
had become
my hands warm from being wrapped in
those of my Guide
held high above my head like
branches on a tree
a permanent stance of praise



Little Glories | Laura Heming

I am about seventy something away from
some sort of home.
At least that is seventy something
thoughts away from what
I had hoped,
that something would burn,
Sweet smoke signals to lead me to
some sort of,
Some shape of,
Some
Web, already spun.
The thrash that I feel in the final
day-mornings,
The one on my insides, and outside my smile

Today it pecks with soft tones of a friend
Who left with some sort of hitchhiker's sack,
With all essentials in tow.
I am about seventy something at the time
that I finally
Take that walk to a home I've
painted some time ago.
Seventy steps and I see the red bird
chase the blue,
The smoke signal fills my lungs with
Some sort of familiar, dark tone.
Keep to your singing
blue bird,
I am some kind of home.

the in between
Kayla Nielsen

On What is Left | Nathan Brink

I lie in bed on winter's night and stare
at shadows cast against the plaster wall,
I think on what is left in life to care.

The sounds outside, a car's loud honk to dare
to break my silent, subtle, inward fall;
I lie on bed on winter's night and stare.

The morning dread, when life has lost all flair,
waits for the dawn that comes
at toddler's crawl,
I think on what is left in life to care.

My bed feels cold without the space to share,
your pillow blank, the sheets too wide a pall,
I lie in bed on winter's night and stare.

I miss the scent of breakfast in the air,
and from downstairs I almost hear your call,
I think on what is left in life to care.

The day awaits; I rise, and breathe, prepare
to face a world where sickness can befall.
I lie in bed on winter's night and stare,
and think on what is left in life to care.

Be Still

Jessica Puddicombe
Acrylic paint, ink, duct
tape on cardboard



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Love Eternal
Alicia Hampton
Watercolour
and ink

Press Pause Nathan Brink

Where did all the people go?
We've all been left alone,
Forgotten flesh makes time move slow
Within our minds and phones.

The great unknown is out there still,
we've left it all behind
Of doubts and fear we've had our fill
of pains within the mind.

We do not look up to the skies
And see the stars above
We've lost the spark of lively eyes
And lost the strength to love.

Press pause and make our time move slow,
and look at what's unknown
Ask where did all the people go,
and why we're so alone.

Je t'aimerai toujours | Charles Bryan

Dew sparkles,
As days first light graces
An eastern meadow.
Bud to blossom

I become still
And warm.
In stillness the light is lost
By the shadow of your smile

As the poetry of life leaves
And my painting changes hue
I am unappeased.
Where is that worn out wish?

Brushing back the cypress branches,
Bluebirds cry out
In recollection:
The cold didn't leave by summer

Pax (Peace) | Ruth Chan

Slow
The worlds colliding
I find
You

Water.
Stars burning
I find You.

There is a free fall
I have found
at the edge of
the Violent waves

There is a strangeness
like typewriter

words
Ink.
Smoke.

The books sit.
The shelves collect dust.
I sit {in}
The old chair
Holding moments in time

The shore is there

There is a free fall I have found
At the edge of the Violent waves
I find You.

Peace
Jessica Puddicombe
Acrylic paint



Small
Michele VanderSpek



Listen | Carly Ververs

An ocean of emotions and thoughts
Crashing over me
Drowning out Your voice
I hear something
Words caught in the wind
What were they?
I need to hear Your voice
I want to know it
Like the back of my hand
So, God, won't You still this sea
Calm these waves?
Quiet my heart, O Lord,
So that I may hear You speak
After a time the sea stills
And the waves calm
I'm left before You, silent
You speak again
A single word, not lost in the wind:
"Listen."

Yellow Kayak | Katie Witten

You sat behind me in the yellow tandem kayak,
and we set forth on a sea as calm
as your eyelids when you sleep
in the sun.

You never learned to steer – no one kayaks where you're from;
so I took the lead and tried to get us to the island,
an attempt soon made useless
when the storm targeted us – only us,
I swear, on that open sea.

Storms hit from every angle every hour
on that sliver of a country, never with forewarning.

The waves grew sharper all around us –
a thousand unseen diamond stones,
honing jagged dagger waves
that would slice our sides like rocks
if we tipped this time around.

Then the clouds gave up and lost it;
I looked back to see your shirt now four
shades darker, glued to the
frame of your body.

You looked back at me, your mouth a morning
stretching sunrise, breaking over slopes of teeth

as you burst into hysteria
uncontainable I was
joining your polyphony.
Our stomachs were ripping, til we snapped in half from
the hilarity – by then we'd both stopped paddling,
our undecided caving
surrender to the sea
as we flipped that golden moonbeam
on its front. We hit the spongy bottom
salty sloshes met our mouths, gasping
we found a way to stand.
I looked back to see you spit out sand and salt;
tangled seaweed wreathed your hair.
And all that time we had only spoken smirks
and glowing half-moons from our mouths.
Never words, but rather your laughter –
its flight, floating lightly
against plunging nails
of rain,
followed by its weightiness –
dwelling still within me,
twelve months anchored
to this day.

Eight months after, back home,
in this stretching breadth of a
country; he sits behind me
in the charcoal tandem kayak.
We both were taught to paddle
long before we could speak in
sentences. Two mariner masters,
educated; world at the tips of our
stale, grasping fingers. "Where to?"
he asks the ridges of my spine,
poking under cotton, dry, two feet
ahead in this cramped restricting
crescent. But I am silent as the water
on this windless afternoon. We have
nowhere to go. No thick rope
of direction pulling us away
from home. We were taught
to steer words before we could
walk. But our mouths are flat;
planks of hardwood. They won't
bend. They can't snap.

Arboreal Advantage
Aaron Timothy Wilkinson

In winter I seem dead.
In summer I seem still.
In springtime I begin to stir
But then in fall seem ill.

Watch me for an hour,
I won't seem to move
But look how tall I've grown and I'll
Have nothing left to prove.

Guardian Angel | Magdalena Brzoska

Time keeps marching on
Keeping me safe from above
From your soul to mine

Today I dusted the knickknacks on the shelf,
all caked in dust and traces of cobwebs.
A delicate figurine had my full attention:
Rose, a Southern Belle in a crinkly red
marble dress
with tawny hair and faded blue eyes.
Every time I paid a visit, those faded eyes
would watch from her pedestal; the side
table.
A woman who believed she would live forever,
elegant once with long chestnut hair.
She reminded me of you.
You were step, though still called grandma.
Haven't forgotten that potent,
eye-watering fragrance
you once wore called wild rose

Was it meant to conceal the musk
of decaying cinders
from your cigarette ends?
Maybe the aroma of chocolate from imported
éclairs?
Remember the crystal chandelier
that dangled above the mahogany
dining table?
Your melodious laugh when my small
fingers traced
rainbows on the pale green walls. I loved it.
Today I dusted all the knickknacks
on the shelf;
four years passed, but the memories of you
won't fade.

Wish
Michelle VanderSpek



The Transcendent Insight of the Realist Tortoise

Aaron Timothy Wilkinson

There was once a different Tortoise and a different Hare.
They heard the tired fable and repeated the affair.
The Hare resolved to not be lax or take the time to rest.
He finished first and all the other creatures named him best.

The Tortoise never crossed the line, he was not seen again.
He found a quiet lake to rest and read during the rain.
Slow and steady never wins, the thought is clear insanity,
But this does not disappoint those who know the race is vanity.

